



November 2003

Flatwater News



A publication by and for the members of the Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska and western Iowa

Calendar:

- Nov. 2** – Art Dart to Joslyn for exhibit, noon
- Nov. 8** – Breakfast at Mahoney State Park
- Nov. 12** – Gearjammers
- Nov. 18** – Cozmo's in Omaha
- Nov. 27** – Thanksgiving
- Nov. 28** – NO Fish at Nehawka because of holiday
- Dec. 5** – Fish at Nehawka
- Dec. 26** – NO Fish at Nehawka because of holiday

Events have elastic starting and ending times. Breakfast at Mahoney is about 9, Gearjammers and Fish begin at about 6:30 and Cozmo's at about 7 p.m.

"Fish At Nehawka" a FAHC Tradition

We go to the Windmill Inn the last Friday of each month (except November and December) to have fried fish, drink beer and show off our cars in the parking lot. This is usually the biggest gathering of the group. If you haven't come before, please give it a try Dec. 5!



All-You-Can-Eat Chili Feed Sun., Nov. 16 at P. O. Pear's On The Lake

The Eastern Nebraska/Western Iowa Car Council, of which FAHC is a member, is planning an all-you-can-eat chili feed on Sunday, November 16, at P. O. Pear's on the Lake near Malcolm (Branched Oak Lake). Three kinds of chili are planned, as are cinnamon rolls. (Long-time Lincolmites, think Miller & Paine.) This is a chance to meet and mix it up with our Detroit Iron brethren from the other 30+ clubs in the Council.

All FAHC club members are invited. A price wasn't set at press time but will be about \$5.00 per person.

To get to P. O. Pear's on the Lake, go west from Lincoln on Highway 34 to Highway 79. Go north on 79 to Raymond Road. Go west on Raymond Road until you come to the lake. Follow the lake road along to the north side and you'll see the marina. Take the Malcolm turn. Anyone interested in carpooling should contact Jim Danielson (402-464-3733) or Gary Rockel (402-420-5977).

FAHC'ers are also invited to the ENWICC "First Sundays" at P. O. Pear's on the Lake. It starts at 5 p.m. and burgers and brews are available.

Regular Events Continue This Fall

Breakfast at Mahoneys on Second Saturdays

FAHC'ers gather the second Saturday of each month for breakfast at Mahoney State Park.

First one there gets a large table for the rest. This month the Mahoney breakfast is on Nov. 8.

There's a \$2.50 gate fee (if you haven't bought the yearly pass for about \$15) and the buffet runs about \$7.95.

Cozmo's Event Third Tuesdays

Dennis and Jane Stone host the FAHC get-together at Cozmo's, 84th and Center, the third Tuesday of every month.

In November, that's the 18th.

Cozmo's offers both ice cream and burgers, along with fresh-brewed ice tea and other food and beverages.

Please stop by a Cozmo's event and visit with the gang of British car folks!

Gearjammers Event Second Wednesdays

Where to meet between Lincoln and Omaha? That was the question and the answer was Gearjammers, on Highway 6 west of Ashland.

Sandwiches, prime rib, burgers, brews and pie are all available and the Reuben is especially good. This month it's on the 12th. Come try it out!



From the Presidential Garage

By Marvin Marshall

Hope you all had a great fall so far. Couldn't ask for better driving conditions, could you?

I'm kinda envious since the old B is still trapped inside the Presidential Palace by a toilet, tub and sink. Work progresses slowly on Sue's house but a couple of the usual band of suspects promise to lend a hand. We may still get to drive it before the snow hits.

Mr. Bredwell took pity on me and let me drive his '55 Triumph TR2 longdoor while we were out on the Loess Hills run a couple weeks back. Thank you one and all for your compliments on my driving skills!

We had 22 cars on that trip up through those beautiful hills. Congratulations to Bob Shaw and Martha Johnson for drawing the winning hand on the Poker Run. They tell me the peach pie was excellent. There's a nice story in this issue about the Loess Hills trip.

What do you think about my new image? I've had some complaints that the old column photo looked like me. Martha Johnson says she will supply a better picture next month.

Some who attended the Halloween Party at Friday Fish in Nehawka wanted to use those pictures. Sorry, I bought all the negatives and accidentally burned them. As expected, the usual band of suspects once again set the bar a little higher...well, maybe lower -- on how to party. A number of souls showed up in costume.

Flatwater again thanks Bartender John, owner of the Windmill Tavern for putting up with us each month.

NOTE: The next Friday Fish will be December 5, because of Thanksgiving. The Gearjammers event and all the rest stay the same.

Get your ideas ready for club events and send them to Gary Rockel or me. The planning committee needs guidance for next year's activities. We'll make sure they consider them.

Now that the cold weather is upon us, take the opportunity to give some tender loving care to your LBCs and the editor. Write some articles for the Flatwater newsletter while you're at it.

I'm going to wrap this up for this month. We have a lot of stuff for this issue and if I rattle on, it make a logistic nightmare for the editor to piece together. Besides, I need to help some of the members take their Halloween make-up and nail polish off.

Keep those cards and letters coming, I read them all! Some of them found their way into 'Ask Uncle Marvin' this month. Now go drive those cars! *Marvin*

P.S. to my ramblings, folks. November 11 is Veteran's Day. Take time to remember these fine American heroes.

For it is they, not the reporter, who have given you freedom of the press. It is these military men and women, not the poets, who have given you freedom of speech. It is the soldiers, sailors and airmen, not some campus organizer, who has given you the freedom to demonstrate. It is these same citizens, and not anyone else; who salute the flag, serve beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag; who allow protesters to burn the flag. You owe your freedom to them. When you see someone who has served our country, lean over and say Thank You.

Dear Uncle Marvin

Dear Uncle Marvin, I have a 1966 Aston Martin D86. It is being professionally restored. There are three different spec SU carburetors listed. Would you happen to know any way to tell which was original for my vehicle? Jim from Delaware.

Dear Jim, The three types, AUD 88F; 88C; and 88R refer to their position on the car. They should all be HD8 with a red/green piston spring. It is likely over the years some one substituted or modified a replacement for a balky one. Since you are going for originality you will need to get the correct linkage, along with the correct carb types. By the way, although I would rebuild with modern needle sets; you can have installed the factory original UX. Good luck with your project!

Dear Uncle Marvin, I bled the brakes on my MG after a complete overhaul. They still seem spongy at times. How do I get all the air out of the system? Ralph

Dear Ralph, From the photos you sent it looks like the pistons are reversed. The bleed valve must point up, not down. Air rises and that is what you are trying to remove, not the fluid out the bottom. You got a lot of air out at first but a tiny amount is now trapped in the top side of the piston chamber. Reverse the two caliper units and bleed again.

Dear Uncle Marv, Do you have a quick fix for oversteer? A.J.

Dear A.J. Sure, don't drive so fast around corners. A real quick fix (and cheap, too!) is to inflate the rear tires 3 to 5 pounds higher than the front ones. Most of our LBCs started out to have independent suspension but the Scottish bean counters got in the way between drawings and production. Hence, sway bars and the like were added over the years. Remember, modern radials handle different than what was stock on your car and correct air pressure in all four is essential.

Cars & Parts 4 Sale

For Sale: 1972 MG Midget, red, good condition, Dave Jennings, 402-435-8876

For Sale: 948 engine, used, turns easy, and bonnet for 1960 Bugeye Sprite. Has some bodywork problems. Gary Rockel, 402-420-5977.

For Rent: Chuck Policky has storage spaces for cars at Yutan if you need winter storage. Members will get a good rate. Give him a call at 402-625-2344.

For Sale: 1966 MGB, black with red interior. Excellent condition, no rust. Most everything rebuilt. \$8000 or best offer. E-mail him at jim.crook@telex.net

For Sale: many MGB, MGA parts. 1979 Midget, good driver. Call Jim Danielson, 402-464-3733.

For Sale - The Tangerine Terror from: "Arnold Gross" <aaron-jo@mindspring.com>

"After 18 Years of Pleasure, I am forced to sell. "The Terror" has to go. Cancer has felled this warrior. Bids are open... Cutoff date is Nov 30th OBO. I promise to remain an active Jensenite as long as the god Lord will allow me a clear mind to do so....." Aaron

(Forwarded by Jensen-Healey owner Michael Linn, who knows this car. Contact Mike for details at 402-493-2586 (Omaha) or at mikelinn@hotmail.com.

For Sale: 1997 BMW M3 coupe, 99k miles, red/black, sunroof, 5-speed, CD, new tires, clutch & brakes, Lynn Fisher, 402-432-2386.

I ran across a '74 TR6 that looked particularly clean, not over-priced, and otherwise interesting.

I would be glad to put a truly interested party in contact with the seller. Here's the data as provided by the owner:

- 1974 TR6, yellow
- original chestnut seats and door panels, appeared to be new but are original
- new black carpet kit installed
- 4-speed (no O.D.)
- Speedometer reads approx. 24,000 miles, and owner asserts that this is the legitimate mileage (by observation, the hoses are green and supposedly original)
- Michelin redlines, original set
- Top described as in good shape except for a 1-2" tear
- No visible rust or body problems has been repainted recently with original color
- floor pans looked clean and engine compartment, too
- One small dent in rear bumper
- Located in Omaha, -Asking price \$8000

Anyway, I thought someone in FAHC might have an interest in this vehicle. Don Larimer, Omaha, dflarim@aol.com

British Car Quiz

Here's your chance to test your knowledge against your co-British Car pals. I'll print the answers next month. The first person who e-mails or snail mails me a list with the most right answers wins a free breakfast at Mahoney Stake Park. Only one entry per membership. Barbara

1. Actor Nicholas Cage's first car was a British sports car. Which one of these was it?
 - a. Jaguar XKE
 - b. MGB
 - c. Sunbeam Tiger
 - d. Triumph Spitfire
2. How many standard colors do you have to select from if you're on the waiting list for a new Morgan? Extra points: Can you name two or more?
 - a. 5
 - b. 8
 - c. 12
 - d. 15
3. Speaking of Morgans, we all know that they are made with a wooden frame and a steel chassis. What type of wood is used in the frame?
 - a. Ash
 - b. Elm
 - c. Oak
 - d. Walnut
4. Who was the first British car manufacturer to adopt the moving assembly line for production of automobiles?
 - a. A.C.
 - b. Morris Motors
 - c. Jaguar
 - d. Vauxhall
5. In what model year did the MGB first change to an 80 MPH speedometer?
 - a. 1964
 - b. 1974
 - c. 1978
 - d. 1980
6. In MG slang, what is known as the "Abingdon Pillow"?
 - a. Head rests
 - b. Large rubber blocks on 1974 MG bumpers instead of overriders
 - c. Mark II MGB padded dash
 - d. Rubber bumpers

Answers in the December 2003 newsletter!



Loess Hills Run

By John Ulrich

There are days when everything goes wrong. After beating my head against the wall trying to make a hundred kids play the right notes, I have to figure I'm due for a "reward" sooner or later. If you were part of the fortunate 17-car, 28 -person caravan that drove the scenic Loess Hills, the reward was sooner.

Sunday morning was a glorious day. If you placed an order, you couldn't have done much better. After meeting at The Pink Poodle in Crescent, IA, we were led on a great route by Joe Guinan with event co-organizer Chrissy (and Gerry) Conant at the end of the pack picking up the pieces.

The mixture of great roads, beautiful foliage, interesting cars, good friends, a poker run, and the perfect number of rest stops was a masterpiece of planning. Way to go Joe and Chrissy!

The car variety was a good cross-section of the club's auto population. Bruce Forbes and Jean Briardy couldn't join us on the run, but saw us off and welcomed us home.

Tom and Rita Saunders drove their Healey 3000 to their first event. (And we hope they will attend many more.) We had the Spitheads

represented by Guinan, Mike Nelson, and new members Rod and Melody Chvatal. Jerry Tessin was in his GT-6, and the TR series consisted of Bob Bredwell's TR-2 and the Conants in their TR-7. After the tour, we were joined for supper by new members Tom and Kim Kegler in a TR-6.

Paul and Lindsay Johaneck, Rich and Pam Brunke, and Ron and Nicolette Bonnsetter brought MGBs and of course Bob Shaw and Martha Johnson drove the "Franken-A." The Danielson/Rixstine group were in the MK I-II-III-IV Sprite, and Gary and Carol Lien had a Lotus Elan with Mazda emblems all over it. Very strange!

Ben and Beverly Anderson picked a Jag XJS for the day, (a choice that was most fortuitous) and Dennis and Jane Stone drove their way-too-fast Jensen Healey.

Bruce and Judy Cratty had the Mini Cooper S, but El Presidente Marvin Marshall left two of his better qualities at home. (That's his wife Sue, and the black MGB if you are trying to count qualities.) Sue had to work, and his car is in various stages of repair. True to form, Marvin was as happy to bum wheel time in MGAs and TR2s as he would be to get a free meal.

Yours truly drove the GT cuz Bev won't ride that far in the Bugeye, and the TR-6 is close (but no cigar) to being on the road.

The best stop on the tour had

to be Small's Orchard. Apples, pumpkins, kettle corn, pies, jelly, cider and more greeted us. Almost everyone tried the free apples and took a little something home with them.

For the TV nostalgia bunch, we did stop in Pisgah, home of the "Old Home Fill'er Up and Keep On Truckin' Café." And yes, we did "have ourselves a convoy," all the way back to the Pink Poodle for prime rib and fried chicken, before going our separate ways.

The bad news was that Jim and Barbara's Sprite just up and quit as they were missing the last turn in Missouri Valley.

Missouri Valley is a pretty dead town on a Sunday, so Barbara was rescued first by the Crattys and then by the Andersons, while Jim teamed up with the Bonnsetters and Saints Dennis and Jane Stone, who seem to make a habit of bringing sick Sprites home on their trailer. (I should know.)

Aside from the mechanical misfortune, it was an outstanding event! Planned and hosted by Flatwater members for Flatwater members. In my humble opinion as membership chair, this is the club at it's grassroots best.

Want an event? Plan one! Not only will you gain a sense of ownership in Flatwater, but the members will be grateful.

Thanks again to Joe and Chrissy, and all who attended.



(Left) Mike Nelson's sons Jack and Joey Nelson check the view (below).



All photo credits this page : Barbara Rixstine

Web Site Growing With Car Gallery

By Ron Bonnstetter and Barbara Rixstine

Checked out the club website lately? You'll find lots of cars on the front page where Ron Bonnstetter has laboriously placed them for all to see. But let's let Ron talk...

"One of the long-term goals for the Flatwater website is to have photos and comments for each club member's car/s.

By clicking on either the gallery small images or the fall show thumbnails, you can go to new club member homepages.

At present, 49 club homepages have been built. If you are one of the 49 members, please feel free to tell your friends the URL to go directly to your homepage. If you have your own British car homepage and want it linked, just send a note to the web master at rib@unl.edu."

If you want to be added to the gallery, send a digital image and a brief statement about the car and Ron will attempt to add these to our club website.

In addition, if you have a web page at some other location, send the URL to be linked. At present Ron does not have time to personalize each club member's web page, but will make as many changes as possible to meet member needs.

Ron has also downsized the pictures so that those with computers powered by two chipmunks can open them without waiting for Medicaid to kick in.

If you haven't checked out the web page recently, you'll also find:

Message Board: If you're missing or selling a part, want to know how to do something or are just interested in what's going on, check out the message board.

Newsletters: Past newsletters are up on the site as well as the current one. Password is our club president's first name, all lower-case letters.

Tech Tips: This page links other pages that can help you find that part for which you're looking, other clubs, etc. Ron recommends the Bugii's site, but there's also articles of interest and MG owner sites.

For Sale: Looking for a car? Know someone who is? Direct them to this site.

Contacts: This is an easy way to get hold of the membership chair, John Ulrich; your newsletter editor Barbara Rixstine, and the club president. For whatever reason.

History: Tells about how the club came about and what our mission is. (It's "have fun with British cars.") We're in our 10th year as a club.

Resources: This is a goldmine. Find your way to other British car clubs, or about journals, lifes, tops, part sites, local contacts and everything else.



Three pictures from the gallery: top - Jeff and Liz Lemon's TR-7, middle - Jay and Liz Fluehr's 1967 Lotus Elan, 1600 Twin Cam and bottom - Doug Buchanan's 1969 MGB.

www.flatwater.org/gallery

Why You Want To Go To Michigan in 2004

John Twist's Summer Party

By Jim Danielson

Seen recently in British magazines and newsletters:

August 12-15, 2004: University Motors Summer Party Reunion, Grand Rapids, Michigan. After 23 years of continuous University Motors MG Summer Parties, my wife, Caroline and I had to take a break. Our last annual event was in 1999. Since then, we've been inundated with requests to have another party. We have tentatively set August 12-15, 2004, as the date of our Summer Party Reunion, which will feature the Twin Cams and Deluxes. We last featured the Twin Cams and Deluxes at the 10th Annual Party in 1986. Three years is enough notice so you can complete your restoration.

Yes, John Twist's Summer Party is back and many of your fellow FAHC members have already made their Grand Rapids, Michigan hotel reservations in preparation.

On the list of caravanners, along with Barbara and me, are Bill and Ferne Evans, Vicky and Ken Grant, Brian and Jane Goldsmith and (we hope) others who haven't yet informed us of their plans.

I had the privilege of visiting John Twist's shop last February for a carburetor workshop and I assure you, you don't want to

pass up this opportunity. It is a fabulous place and John Twist is one interesting guy. It's not an exaggeration to say he's a guru of British car mechanics. One hour each workday he is available to give MG advice to anyone calling him from anywhere in the world.

If you've never had the opportunity to travel up the west coast of Michigan towards Grand Rapids, it's an experience unlike any other in the midwest.

John's party started with just a few friends and customers and now, in some years, is the largest gathering of MGs in the country. Hundreds of MGs descend on the Grand Rapids area. Don't wait, go to the University Motor's web site - universitymotorsltd.com -- and get the details today.

If you go:

Plans aren't firm, but we will probably leave Lincoln Sunday, August 8, arrive in Grand Rapids on the 10th, stay for the party and return home around the 17th.

If you're interested in making reservations, here's the info:

Grand Rapids Airport Hilton
4747 28th St. SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49512

Phone: 616-957-0100

Fax: 616-977-5632

Ask for Janet.



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Please patronize our sponsors whenever you can and thank them for supporting the Flatwater Austin-Healey Club.

Club Shirts Still Available

What? You still haven't gotten your club shirt?

Members who want to proudly show off their club affiliation will find no time like the present to buy and wear the blue, FAHC logo'ed club shirts AND enrich the club treasury at the same time.

The shirts are \$25 each for sizes M to XL and \$27 for XXL. Call Nicolette Bonnstetter (pictured right) who has the inventory and can get them to you *tout* sweet. (That's French for real fast.) Call Nicolette today at 402-423-9138 or e-mail her at nkb@unlserve.unl.edu.



Could have had a V-8?

A site for those who've considered various types of cars with V-8 transplants: www.britishv8.org. There is a handy table of weights and dimensions of various V8 engines to help in selecting the best fit and also links to individual sites that have transplanted V8s.



Miscellaneous Sputterings

By John Rued

I was in crew rest the other morning. Crew rest is a nebulous term describing that period before flying where one should be resting. I prefer to look at crew rest as an opportunity to do things I normally couldn't do because normally I'm working. So, with the morning at my disposal, I made plans to head down to the Durham museum with Ann and her father to see the departure of No. 3985.

Locomotive No. 3985 is the peak of steam technology—a 50-ton 4-6-6-4 (which is train talk for really, really big) Challenger—that was used to haul freight over the continental divide. This monster was— and is—awesome.

Any questions as to the exact location of No. 3985 were quashed as we saw billowing clouds of steam just to east of the museum. We parked and scrambled out, each one of us with a camera. Each moved to a different part of the rail yard, seemingly seeking the ultimate vantage point to photograph the beast, yet, I suspect, more to seek reverent isolation in which to revel in a majestic piece of history.

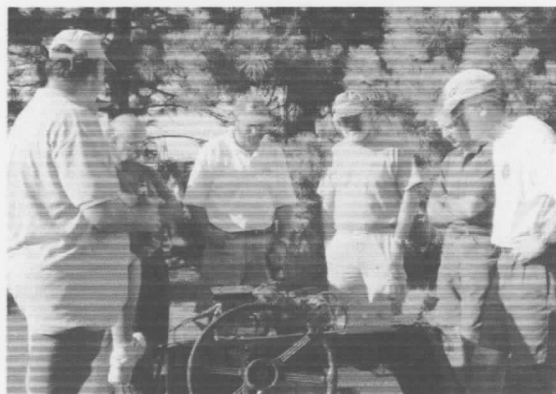
I swapped my long lens for a wide-angle and crab-walked up to the face of the behemoth, attempting to shoot the back-lit engine; the silver disc of the sun slightly whiter than the accumulating rolls of steam.

At precisely eight o'clock, the whistle blew and the bell clanged. No. 3985 began its journey home.

Any indecision as to our next course of action was moot. We chased the train. Down 75. Across 80. All the time keeping a visual on the plumes of steam as the engine slowly made its way through Omaha. Exit at L. Then 275. On toward Valley. Along the way were isolated bands of spectators.

We stopped at a rural crossing. Ann suggested I put my head to the tracks to determine the train's location. I needn't have bothered: my actions were interrupted by the lowering of the crossing guards and the continuous ringing of the bells. I jumped back just in time to see No. 3985 roar by at speed. It was magic.

Caption Contest Answers



Here's what some members thought these six serious guys might be saying:

Bill Redinger: "It looks like original equipment. If we could only figure out where it goes."

Tim Creger: "I found this car in a barn in 19 boxes. I got this far and ran out of parts so I figure I'm done with the restoration."

Leo Thietje: "Who'd ever keep a car this long, anyway?"

Barbara Rixstine: "Wish I had a beer like Guinan. He's always the lucky one."

So what prompts Union Pacific to operate 3985? After all, UP is a company that must watch its profit line and the operation of the sole surviving Challenger is anything but profitable.

It moves only during the summer months and rarely hauls anything that pays. Yet UP underwrites tremendous expenses to keep a one-of-a-kind steam engine rolling. UP has accepted an obligation to embrace its past as a way to touch millions of nostalgia-crazy Americans.

It gives pause to think... What prompts us to operate our British cars? Most of us live on practical budgets and the operation of obsolete-when-new British iron is anything but practical.

We drive them only during nice weather, only during the driving season, and rarely on trips to the Hy-Vee.

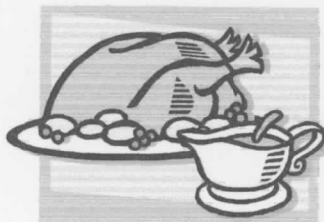
Yet we underwrite extravagant expenses in keeping these things on the road. Maybe for the same reasons that UP holds on to its steam heritage. Maybe to provide that link to a nostalgia-crazy driving public's past.

We drivers are the curators of a living piece of history.

We are obligated to keep that magic alive.

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska
an affiliate of the Austin-Healey Club of America

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Due to the Thanksgiving holidays, Fish at Nehawka will be Friday, Dec. 5, not Friday, Nov. 28.

Enjoy the holidays with your family!

The Flatwater News is published monthly. Members are welcome and encouraged to contribute items to: fahcmailbag@yahoo.com. All submissions may be edited for length and information.

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The Flatwater News is published for members like:



Photo credit: Ron Bonnstetter

Martha Johnson, shown here at this year's All-British Show with her MGB-GT. Martha and husband Bob Shaw have been with the Flatwater Club since almost the beginning and were major components of the Missouri Valley, Iowa Rescue Team during the Loess Hills Run.

Martha is an artist, photographer, textile designer and probably has several other talents we haven't seen. Her work can be seen on the Shaw's Garage website www.mlcltd.com/shawsgarage and her own Mid-Life Crisis Limited web site, www.mlcltd.com.

Thanks for being a member, Martha!